

QUACK

By Patrick Gabridge

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A Ten Minute Dramatic Duet

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SYNOPSIS: Abigail is an impressionable young duck who is unaware of her limitations until they are pointed out to her by the man she loves. A funny and devastating look at first loves.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(1 female, 1 male)

ABIGAIL (f) A duck, played by a young woman. (43 lines)

ANDY (m) A young man. (43 lines)

TIME: The present.

SET: Bare stage, with a table, and chairs.

COSTUMES

ABIGAIL – Jeans, a sweater, orange socks and sneakers

ANDY – A jacket or sweatshirt with large pockets.

PROPS

- A White Egg (that opens such as an Easter egg)
- A Small Duckling (plastic or plush)
- Two Cereal Bowls
- Two Spoons

AUTHOR'S NOTE

Simplicity and clarity are really the key to this piece. I've seen productions all around the world, and some have gotten so complicated they even had a real swimming pool on stage. But in this case, less is definitely more. A table and chairs is all you need. The first half greatly benefits from quick, seamless transitions.

PRODUCTION HISTORY

The first production of *Quack* won the top prize at SlamBoston at Boston Playwrights' Theatre, with the cast as follows:

ABIGAIL ----- Theresa Nguyen

ANDY ----- Chris Larson

Directed by ----- Lindsay Eagle

Special Thanks:

Thanks to Rhombus for helping me hear and shape the earliest drafts.

And to my daughter, Kira, for the inspiration.

AT RISE: *ABIGAIL, addresses the audience. She is a duck, but you wouldn't know it to look at her.*

ABIGAIL: My first day on this earth was... well... perfect. One moment I was in the dark, inside my egg.

ANDY enters, holding a white egg.

ABIGAIL: And then there was light. Blinding light. Like the universe suddenly exploding into existence.

ANDY opens the egg, and takes out a small duckling.

ANDY: Hi, there.

ABIGAIL: And there he was, shining like the sun. The exact opposite of what my life had been like until that moment. He was warm, and alive, and he smiled at me with that absolutely perfect smile.

ANDY: Aren't you cute? Wow. Look at you.

ANDY strokes the duckling in his hands.

ABIGAIL: And his touch. So gentle. There I was, downy and damp, new to the world, and he was so strong and capable. And the music of his voice rested in my ears, my first sound, my first symphony, against which all others would be measured.

ANDY: I'm going to take care of you. We're going to be pals, you and me. Right? Look at you. So soft and cuddly. You're going to need a name. How about Abigail? Abigail and Andy. A perfect match.

ABIGAIL: A perfect match.

ANDY puts the duckling into his pocket.

ANDY: Look, I've got the perfect spot for you. Nice and cozy, and you can keep me company all day long.

ABIGAIL: Warm and cozy. So close, I could feel his heart beat. And I could poke my head out and see the whole world. We went everywhere together.

ANDY'S is now in a restaurant.

ANDY: I'll take a double cheeseburger and fries, and a chocolate milk shake. And a little something for my friend. Abigail. Thanks. I know, adorable, right? How about some soup and salad? Perfect.

ABIGAIL: He took such good care of me. Fed my body and mind.

ANDY'S is now in class and raises his hand.

ANDY: Professor, can't we trace the moment of revolution back to the Boston Massacre, when Hutchinson was forced to remove British troops from the city? That sudden moment of triumph against power?

ANDY smiles at having given the correct answer. ABIGAIL smiles admiringly at ANDY.

ANDY: *(Speaks to the duckling in his pocket.)* Not bad, huh?

ABIGAIL: He knew so much. About everything. And I listened and watched everything he did and everything around us. And I grew. And we were always together. He took me to movies:

They're now at the Movies. ANDY steps up next to ABIGAIL.

ANDY: *(Optional: As he's watching, can make the scary notes from "Jaws" theme.)* "You're going to need a bigger boat."

ANDY suddenly covers ABIGAIL'S eyes to keep her from seeing a scary part.

ABIGAIL: He protected me from harm. He taught me to sing.

ANDY: *(Singing.)* "YOU CAN'T ALWAYS GET WHAT YOU WA-ANT."

ABIGAIL: *(Singing.)* "BUT IF YOU TRY SOMETIMES, YOU JUST MIGHT FIND, YOU GET WHAT YOU NEED."

ANDY crosses the stage, and ABIGAIL walks with him.

ABIGAIL: He introduced me to his friends.

ANDY: Hey everybody, this is Abigail. I know. Isn't she great? She comes with me everywhere.

ABIGAIL: (*Gives a little bow.*) He brought me to meet his parents.

ANDY and ABIGAIL cross to the other side of the stage.

ANDY: Hi Mom. Hi Dad. Yeah, I know I should call more often. Sorry. You know how it is, life gets so busy. We've just got a lot going on. Oh, of course, this is Abigail. I told you about her.

ABIGAIL does a little twirl.

ANDY: Amazing, right? Well, no. I don't know. Yes, I think she's very special. Most people have never seen anyone quite like her. She's a lot of fun to have around.

ABIGAIL: And we were very happy together. So very happy. I mean, maybe not everyone completely understood. Maybe they were jealous. I don't know. There might have been a few awkward moments. Some people just aren't as friendly as they could be. They might say things that aren't... nice. I don't know why. I say you should take those little ear worms from unfriendly voices and eat them right up. I wish I knew which one it was. Where it came from. Who said it. We were so... very happy.

ANDY and ABIGAIL are now at the breakfast table together, both eating cereal.

ANDY: Abigail?

ABIGAIL: Yes, Andy?

ANDY: Nothing.

They return their focus to breakfast.

ANDY: Abigail?

ABIGAIL: Yes, Andy?

ANDY: Nothing. Well, not exactly nothing. You know, I'm teaching my first class this morning.

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